

COMMUNITY DEFENCE

Bulletin of the Hackney Community Defence Association
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20p



POLICE DRUG RING EXPOSED

"The most serious case of corruption in the Metropolitan Force in 20 years." That's how one of New Scotland Yard's top cops anonymously described the scandal at Stoke Newington Police Station.

The Yard's anti-corruption squad, CIB2, has been running a high level inquiry into allegations of drug dealing and planting at the North London 'Supernick' for more than a year. Operation 'Jackpot' - as the police call their investigation - was set up following

the arrest of a Stoke Newington PC, Roy Lewindowski, who has been charged with theft and VAT fraud.

The six strong 'Jackpot' team have tapped the telephones of officers under investigation, and taken hundreds of statements about corruption and malpractice. They are thought to be investigating more than a dozen officers up the rank of sergeant.

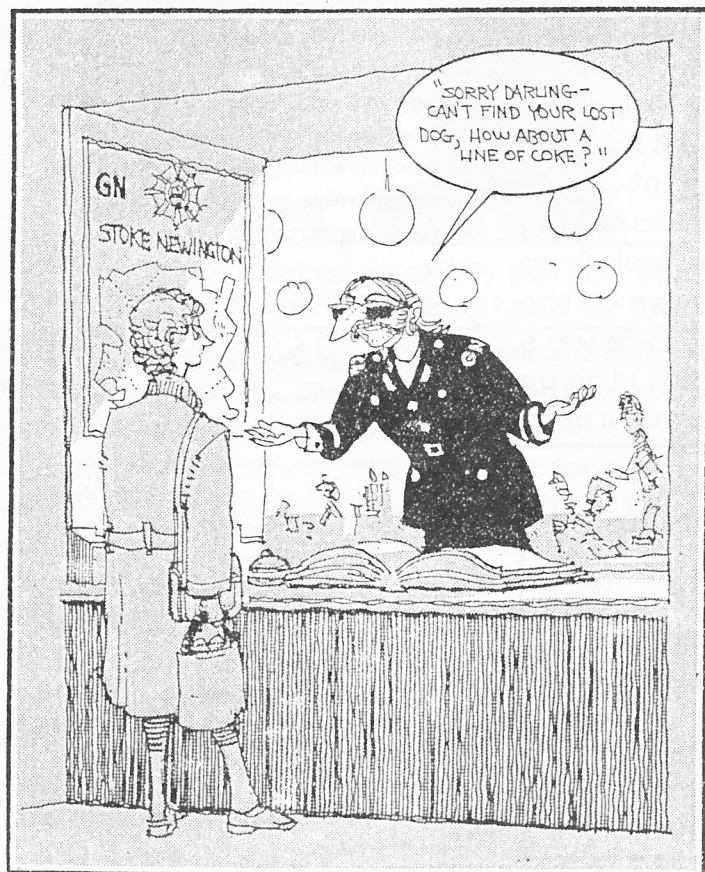
Scotland Yard claim that the inquiry has led to the transfer of
Cont'd overleaf...

NEW HCDA OFFICE

H.C.D.A. has recently completed negotiations on the shared rental of four offices and a meeting room. The coming together of H.C.D.A. with other organisations has allowed us to continue with our campaigning. The Family Center, our location for four years, has been closed and will be demolished.

The as-yet unnamed center will become an independent community center offering unique facilities for people in Hackney. To enable the center to succeed it needs the support of the community, it needs to be used. Advice sessions and social events are planned. The meeting room is available for hire.

An official opening is proposed for September 1, with a public meeting to launch a membership of supporters. All progressive people are invited.



POLICE DEALING Cont'd eight officers and leaks from Stoke Newington revealed that 27 disciplinary notices had been served at the 'supernick'. In addition to the arrest of Lewindowski, two officers have been suspended. DC Ronald Palumbo and PC Bruce Galbraith were suspended in June, after both had featured in media reports about the scandal and Palumbo had been named by in Parliament by Hackney South and Shoreditch MP Brian Sedgemore.

The MP also named PS Gerry Carroll, formerly a custody officer at Stoke Newington, who shot himself dead with a police firearm after his mysterious transfer to Barkingside Station. Sedgemore claimed that Carroll was involved in organised crime.

But HCDA has been running its own independent inquiry into the scandal. We have discovered that at least 19 officers involved in drugs operations at Stoke Newington up to a year and a half ago are no longer serving at the station. HCDA is investigating more than 30 drug plants stretching back to May 1989. The cases involve more than 40 officers up to the rank of inspector. Many of those who have approached us have independently made similar allegations against a core of about a dozen officers.

HCDA has uncovered

evidence that police officers:

- were supplying drugs to as many as four street level dealers selling in the Sandringham Road area from late 1989 onwards.
- were protecting their dealers by warning them about police anti-drug operations.
- took out anybody they suspected of competing with their dealers, sometimes by planting them with drugs.
- covered their drug dealing activities by claiming that their dealers were police informers.

There is no way of knowing how many people have been planted with drugs by Stoke Newington Police over the past three years, but the 'Jackpot Team' are investigating more than one hundred complaints, and it is certain that many of those planted would not have bothered making an official complaint.

One officer was making up to £2000 per week from the racket, and one of the dealers that police were supplying was selling up to 30 rocks of crack a day.

WATCHING THE DETECTIVES:

**A report of the HCDA investigation into the Stoke Newington police drugs scandal
AVAILABLE FROM THE
HCDA OFFICE
Price &2.00 (inc P+P)**

SQUATTERS FIGHT BACK

Police tactics against squatters in Hackney have been dealt a 'double whammy' by a recent series of court cases. A total of six people were acquitted of charges resulting from two raids on squatters' parties in a recent series of trials, which saw police accounts of the incidents clearly discredited.

The raids, on Chat's Palace in March 1991 and the Neville Arms earlier this year, both saw clashes provoked by the police, and a large number of arrests. They are part of a continuing police attempt to criminalise squatters in Hackney.

At Chat's Palace, police were called to a benefit gig for Poll Tax prisoners by the venue management when a fight broke out. They arrived half-an-hour later, by which time the incident had long finished. There were scuffles as they entered the venue at around midnight, but the most serious charges resulted from arrests some time later. A group of three people were charged with obstruction and violent disorder after a bottle was allegedly thrown at police.

PC Hargreaves told a bemused jury that officers were called to a disturbance at an anti-Poll Tax meeting, and arrived only to be immediately attacked by participants in a spontaneous demonstration.

The raid took place on the eve of the anniversary march against Poll Tax through Trafalgar Square, and all those arrested were held in custody until after the demonstration was over. At the time, squatters groups and anti-Poll Tax campaigners referred to this tactic as internment.

Cases are still coming up from the Neville Arms raid, but the precedent set by the one trial so far is good. A charge of assaulting police was dismissed by magistrates at Highbury after even they couldn't bring themselves to believe PC Andrew Thomas' account of how the defendant had spat at him through the open window of a car from over 20 feet away. PC Thomas also gave unconvincing evidence to the jury in the Chat's Palace bottle throwing trial.

Despite serious anomalies in police evidence, the case were only won by careful preparation - tracing witnesses, taking statements and piecing together a coherent account of the events leading up to the arrests.

UNSEEN JUSTICE

On March 19th 1992 Mrs Marie Burke, a Black woman in her 70's, was awarded £50 000 damages by a Croydon jury against the police. Mrs Burke and her husband Edgar took out a joint civil action against the police. The award was without doubt a victory, however it needs to be seen in the context of the whole case. The victory was widely reported in the national press. What they

This was the first case taken up by HCDA - on January 15th 1989.

The Burkes' car had been involved in a minor road traffic accident while being driven by a family friend. Mr Burke, then aged 76, was ill in bed at the time of the accident but Hackney police officers insisted that he had been driving the car. When Mr Burke refused to be breathalysed, he was

treating her husband. He is a diabetic and, at his request, she took his tablets and a jug of water out to him in the police van, dressed only in her nightclothes. She didn't reach the van.

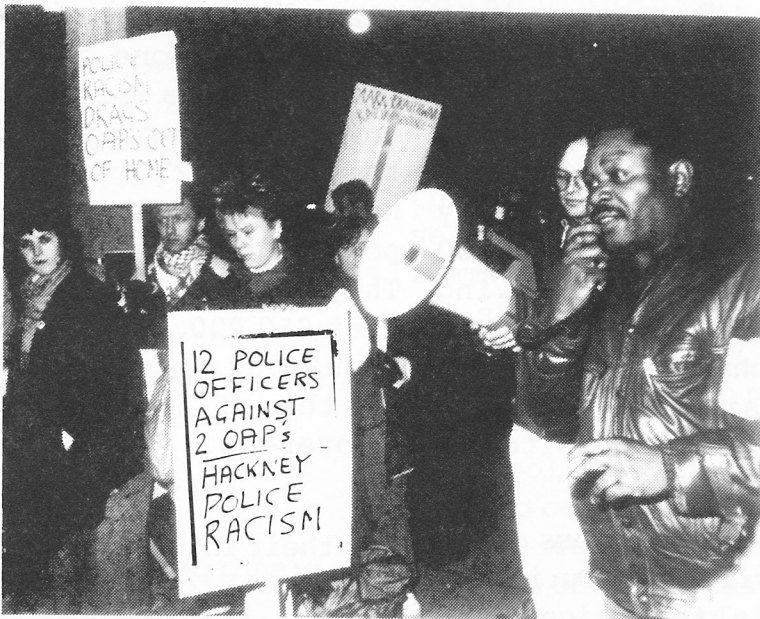
PC Tina Martin wrestled her to the ground where she was held for several minutes. This scene was witnessed by a passer-by. Mrs Burke was arrested and charged with actual bodily harm against Martin. She was held in custody for a little under three hours. She was strip-searched in Hackney police station.

The police dropped the charge against Mrs Burke two days later.

The Hearing

Mr and Mrs Burke's civil action was heard in front of an all white jury, most of whom were over 40. The police could not challenge the account presented by Mr and Mrs Burke. Instead they made it into a political trial by ignoring the facts of the case and concentrating the jurors' minds on "anti-police agitators" in Hackney.

The central plank of the police's defence was that the two old aged pensioners, who the jury no doubt felt great sympathy for had "allowed themselves to be used" by Hackney Community Defence Association, whose members were present in the public



HCDA picketed Hackney police station on the evening of the attack on the Burkes

did not report was how the Metropolitan Police conducted their defence against Mr and Mrs Burke's civil action for trespass, assault, false imprisonment and malicious prosecution. Nor did they report on how Mr Burke lost his civil action and how Mrs Burke nearly lost hers.

The Facts

manhandled out of his home by three police officers and taken to Hackney police station in his underwear.

After five minutes in police custody he was released without being breathalysed and without charge.

During the arrest Mrs Burke, then aged 70, objected to the way in which the police were

UNSEEN JUSTICE, Cont'd
gallery of the court.

One officer caused consternation in the police ranks when described what had happened in much the same way as Mr and Mrs Burke. He even said another officer "might have" been pinning Mrs Burke on the ground.

The Findings

The police had a sympathetic jury - white, middle-aged, respectable working and lower middle class people do not want to believe that the public servants who are responsible for their safety go around assaulting OAPs.

The jury were unanimous when rejecting Mr Burke's case. They were also unanimous when rejecting most of Mrs Burke's claims. However, by seven to one they found in favour of Mrs Burke on five out of ten of her points. They found that she had been

assaulted, falsely imprisoned and maliciously prosecuted.

There was a strong element of racism in the jury's findings. Where it was a straight question of who to believe, two black people or the police, they found in favour of the police. They only found for Mrs Burke because a white passer-by, and middle class at that, witnessed her being pinned to the ground in a most painful way with 28 officers present on the scene. And even then, one juror couldn't manage to accept that the police had behaved wrongly!

After all this, the jury awarded Mrs Burke £15,000 compensation for having been falsely imprisoned for nearly three hours, £20,000 compensation for having been held on the ground and manhandled and £15,000 compensation for malicious prosecution, despite the

fact that the charge had been dropped within 48 hours!

It was as if the jury had felt guilty about what they had done, and made up for it by awarding Mrs Burke vast amounts of money.

Justice Denied

The Croydon jury arrived at a perverse verdict. The police must have wanted to appeal against the amount of damages awarded to Mrs Burke. But, to have done so would have meant that Mr Burke's case would also be reconsidered. As it stood, the police could claim that the jury had found only one police officer, Tina Martin, to have behaved wrongly, and the other 27 had done nothing wrong at all. The police did not appeal. They must have decided that £50 000, and tens of thousands more in costs was the inflated price of a cover-up.

The Burkes write...

Dear HCDA,
I am writing to thank you all for the help and support given to my parents, Mr and Mrs Burke. The pain and humiliation they suffered is impossible to put into words. At the time, they were over 70 years old, they were terrorised in their own home, dragged onto the street, assaulted in full view of the neighbours and then carted off to the police station in their nightclothes. Then

there was the stress of the civil action. During the trial the police tried to make out that my parents were some sort of political activists trying to stir up trouble with HCDA always in the background, telling them what to do. HCDA gave us good advice, helped us deal with our solicitors, and gave us moral and practical support. My parents did not need encouraging or influencing; they wanted justice and compensation in court

for their injuries and punishment for the police officers that had assaulted them. Nothing has happened to the officers that were involved, they are still working in the same way, doing God only knows what to innocent people. We have to get on with the rest of our lives; all we have left is a bitter taste in our mouths.

Yours sincerely,

Annette Monerville.

Readers' Letters

Dear HCDA,

On Thursday 4th June, I read in the 'Guardian' newspaper that group of lawyers, HCDA, and the people that they represent, met with Hackney South and Shoreditch MP Brian Sedgemore to discuss the investigation into corruption at Stoke Newington Police Station. In the report, there was no mention of Diane Abbott, the MP for Hackney North and Stoke Newington. Was she present at the meeting? If not, why not? The station is in her constituency, and many of the people who have suffered live there. Was she invited? If not, why not? I would be interested to know if she was asked to the meeting, and if she didn't come, whether she has explained why.

Yours in solidarity,

Name and Address withheld at writer's request.

HCDA replies: Diane Abbott was indeed asked to attend, and in fact her office booked the meeting room in the House of Commons. It is true that many of those whose cases we are trying to get re-opened are her constituents. They are also all black, and for both these reasons we were very disappointed that she did not come.

Up against the law: JUVENILE LAW - Pt.1

Special safeguards exist to protect young people and juveniles from the police. Here, we present an introduction to this important area of the law. Legally speaking, a young person is anyone between the ages of 17 and 21 and a juvenile is anyone under the age of 16 years.

Stop and search

Police powers to stop young people and juveniles are identical to those for adults. They must have reasonable grounds to suspect that the person ought to be searched for illegal items:

- stolen property
- drugs
- a blade or sharp point
- an offensive weapon
- tools which may be used to commit burglary, theft, taking a motor vehicle or for obtaining property by deception.

The police can only conduct a street search in a public place. This means that they cannot come into a school because this is not a place open to the general public. If police officers come to your school to carry out a search without arrest you should ensure that they have the permission of a Headteacher and discover the reasons that the Head has given.

Force can be used to conduct the search. It must be reasonable and used only as a last resort. If the police use force which is excessive you are entitled to defend yourself. The Police will have to justify themselves and show the violence they used was reasonable in all circumstances.

The police have no powers to strip search anyone in a public place. If they want to conduct a strip search they must remove a person to somewhere not in public such as a police van or station.

Every officer carrying out a search must tell the person his name and the police station to which he is attached. He must also give his reasons for his search and say where a copy of the written record of his search can be obtained. If the officer is not in uniform he must show his warrant card to prove his identity.

Further practical information about the topics listed below - and others - will appear in future issues of Community Defence.

- Arrest
- Interviews on arrest
- Information on arrest
- At the police station
- Place of arrest
- Bail
- Search on arrest
- At court

Watch this space!

HCDA: WHERE WE STAND

The Hackney Community Defence Association was set up in the Summer of 1988. It is a self-help group which consists of people who have suffered police injustice. It is an unfunded organisation which survives entirely on donations. All our work is done by volunteers.

Because of the limitations on our resources, we restrict our work to residents of the London Borough of Hackney, or people whose cases involve police officers from one of the Borough's three stations: City Road, Hackney and Stoke Newington.

We don't provide victims of police malpractice with a service. We don't take up people's cases on their behalf. People who have suffered at the hands of the police play a major part in preparing their own cases, attend our meetings and help support others in the same position. In this way, we work to give victims control over their own case, to overcome their powerlessness against the police and the criminal justice system.

HCDA is a political organisation in this respect, but we are non-party political.

There are three main ways that HCDA supports its members:

A. LEGAL SUPPORT WORK.

We take up the cases of people who have suffered at the hands of the police. We advise people about the different courses of action open to them; and we help them to prepare their case and deal with their lawyers.

B. MUTUAL SUPPORT NETWORK

Many of our members have been traumatised by their experience of police injustice. HCDA gives support to victims, based on our collective experiences of having suffered at the hands of the police.

C. CHALLENGING POLICE POWER

We counter police abuse of their powers by raising the issue of police malpractice and violence in public, campaigning for legal reforms and building an independent community organisation which can challenge the power of the police.

1992 has proved to be a turning point for us. Four years of hard work have started to pay off. As a very small independent self help group, we have nevertheless made an important contribution to the debate on policing.

We have responded to our higher profile by holding discussions about how we can increase the involvement of the community in HCDA.

We have set up sub groups dealing with particular aspects of our activities (eg publicity), and launched a membership and affiliation scheme. We hope that everyone who believes in the need for an organisation like HCDA will take advantage of this opportunity to support our work in any way they can.

Membership is divided into three categories:

FULL MEMBERSHIP

is open to everyone who supports HCDA's aims and objectives; pays their membership fees and regularly attends meetings.

ASSOCIATE MEMBERSHIP

is open to everyone who supports HCDA's aims and objectives and pays their membership fees.

AFFILIATE MEMBERSHIP

is open to organisations; solicitors firms; barristers chambers; trade union branches; etc.

All members receive copies of our bulletin 'Community Defence'. Annual membership fees are as follows:

INDIVIDUALS

£5 waged; £2(or less) low/unwaged

ORGANISATIONS

£25 local; more for larger groups.

Join HCDA Today!

I/We would like to join HCDA, and enclose my/our membership fee _____

Return to: HCDA, Unit D, 10a Bradbury Street, London N16 8NJ.

Name _____

Address _____

- ☐ I/We want more info about how to get involved in HCDA's work
☐ I/We enclose a donation of _____

NB. IF YOU HAVE RECEIVED THIS BULLETIN IN THE POST, BUT HAVE NOT YET PAID YOUR MEMBERSHIP FEE, THIS WILL BE THE LAST YOU HEAR FROM US UNTIL YOU COUGH UP!

DEFENSE COMMUNITY

Bulletin of the Hockney Community Defense Association
Unit D, 100 Broadway Street, Boston MA 02107, 617-343-0123



COMMUNITY DEFENCE

Bulletin of the Hackney Community Defence Association
Unit D, 10a Bradbury Street, London N16 8NJ. 071-249-0193

